

These Days . . .

By George E. Sokolsky

Eisenhower, Kennedy and Cuba

THE CAMPAIGN has resolved itself into a slugging match between President Kennedy and former President Eisenhower. As they both did the same thing, and have not been too far from each other in principle, there is much dancing about the ring. The candidates for Governor and for Congress were just preliminaries.

Now some say that it is bad to talk about foreign affairs because it upsets the foreigners and makes them nervous and the foreigners may lose confidence in us. Oh my!

Roosevelt used that line in each campaign subsequent to 1932. Please don't talk about foreign affairs; in fact, talk about nothing. So he managed to be elected four times because the party in opposition had nothing to say. In fact, it all got around to that me-too business, which is a political narcotizer. In this campaign, the big issue is Cuba and the pot is calling the kettle black.

Let us put down some dates:

Eisenhower Administration

1956: A year of political disturbances; revolution which Batista said he put down but which Herbert Matthews of the New York Times said was continuing. Castro lands in Oriente Province. The State Department had records of Castro's Communist affiliations since 1948.

1957: Castro forces active. Fidel Castro had taken part in Bogotaza (1948) regarded as extreme radical. His



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brother, Raul, a Communist; his chief adjutant, Che Guevara, a Communist.)

March 13 — U. S. tourist killed. U. S. Government silent and inactive.

May 24—New revolutionary force lands in Cuba. Explosion knocks out Havana power works.

May 17—Earl E. T. Smith appointed Ambassador after a pro-Castro briefing by Herbert Matthews.

Aug. 1 — Batista suspends the constitution.

Revolutionists seized near Key West; their real base of operation is Miami, on American soil.

1958: Castro continues raids and revolutionary activity. Receives arms and personnel from the United States. Civil war continues throughout the year. American Ambassadors Gardner, Smith, Hill, Braden, Pauley have warned the State Department of the character of the Castro revolution and that the Castros were Communist or Communist-affiliated. No action.

1959: Castro takes over. He sets up a revolutionary government.

1960: Red China steps in to buy the Cuban sugar crop and Red Chinese advisers arrive in Cuba in large numbers. Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and other Communist countries establish commercial pacts with Cuba.

The State Department had withheld supplies from Batista, assuming that Castro was a democratic leader, but on Oct. 1, President Eisenhower declared that the United States will defend its base at Guantanamo, and thenceforth recognized what had

really happened and what the danger is.

Kennedy Administration

1961: Murder, rapine, abuse of human rights continues. Russians disclose their association with Castro revolution. Khrushchev vows aid to Castro, April 18.

April 30—Che Guevara declares Cuba socialized—announces 5-year Plan—Communist International announces support. Red China announces it will build factories in Cuba.

May 1 — Castro declares Cuba socialist. He says: "If Mr. Kennedy does not like socialism, we don't like imperialism, we don't like capitalism." He warns that the United States "aggressive policy" is "putting New York in danger of becoming another Hiroshima."

State Department declares Cuba a Communist country.

April 17—Landing at Bay of Pigs by Cuban anti-Communists — organized in the United States under the auspices of CIA. Air cover removed by President Kennedy. Invasion fails.

Dec. 12—Castro announces: "I am a Marxist-Leninist and will be one until the day I die. The rest of the world is on the road toward communism. Cuba's program will be Marxist-Leninist but adopted to conditions in Cuba."

This is not, of course, the whole story of Cuba from 1956 to 1962, but it is a sufficient outline to indicate what happened. Neither Mr. Eisenhower nor Mr. Kennedy can be held blameless. They should not attack each other about this as both have pursued identical do-nothing policies.

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